

From: Alexander Hutton
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/18/01 3:18pm
Subject: Microsoft Remedy

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to you to express my extreme displeasure with the proposed anti-trust settlement.

The reasons for my displeasure are simple. If, in fact, Microsoft is a monopoly and has abused its position as found by the court system, then the settlement only serves to strengthen that monopoly, NOT remedy the situation.

It will not seriously punish Microsoft for the following reasons:

1.) The cost of goods provided do not equate to a "cost detriment" for the amount stated. Software, aside from the time to develop, the \$1.00 or so it would cost to produce the CD and paper goods, only has value to the consumer. So even a billion dollars worth of software "donated" to schools might only actually cost Microsoft a hundred thousand dollars worth of \$.02 compact discs.

2.) Microsoft has an enormous cash position. Even if they were to somehow be forced to pay 1/10 of their liquid assets, they'd still have more money than 99.999% of the businesses in the world, and certainly a grossly large amount when compared to various competitors. So much cash that, it would not put them or their business practices at risk, nor would it serve to curtail their monopolistic practices at all.

Furthermore, the remedy will actually HELP Microsoft. If, for example, you were a rich Arab speaking nation that desired to influence the western world into increasing trade with your homeland. One way you could naturally affect that outcome would be if all children attending American schools were to learn Arabic. What better way to make sure that happens than to donate what seems like a huge sum of goods and services to the "impoverished" school systems of America? How much better for you if your donation actually didn't tangibly cost you any real considerable cash flow? Soon, these schools, whose foreign language programs have been languishing without proper funding, would almost automatically be producing young citizens to be fluent in Arabic - thus increasing the probability that when they entered the job pool they would use these skills to betterment of themselves and said Arab nation.

In the same way, planting Microsoft products in schools (one of the few niche markets that Microsoft does not own 95% market share) will only encourage future use of their products and services, and wide spread

adoption of their technologies. This remedy actually hurts competition, and increases their market share even more.

Please consider other options, I would recommend options that actually increase the adoption of open standards authored and steered by multi-vendor bodies.

Thank You

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